

F.Z.S., dated Chingleput, 9th August, 1862, was read to the meeting :—

“SIR,—I have much pleasure in sending you a short account of the Viper *Daboia elegans* (*Vipera Russellii*)—the Tamil name being ‘Kunuadi Vyrien,’ or ‘Kuturee Pamhoo.’

“Since sending you the skin, with skull entire, I have succeeded in procuring several specimens, alive and dead, both here and on the Shervaroy Hills, during a recent stay there of two months. The largest specimen in my collection at present measures 5 feet in length, and 7 inches in circumference at the thickest part of its body. Its head is large, elongate, depressed, rounded on the sides, and covered with acutely and regularly-keeled scales; nostrils large, subsuperior, anterior, and in the centre of a ring-like shield, edged with a large scale above; eyes convex, pupil round; nasal shield smooth in front; superciliary shield narrow, elongate, and distinct in front; jaws weak, upper toothless, with large, slightly curved, double fangs; lower jaw toothed; tongue long and forked: colour brown, with three rows of oblong (in the young, circular or oval) white-edged brown spots; two brown spots on each side of the occiput, separated by a narrow, oblique, yellow temporal streak. Scuta 168, subcaudals 52.

“From the three rows of white-edged spots being linked to each other, it is commonly called the Chain Viper. The Tamil name of ‘Kunuadi Vyrien’ literally means Glass Viper; that of ‘Kuturee Pamhoo,’ Scissors Snake. This name it receives from having double fangs, which are invariably present, of equal length, if not on both, on one side at least: these the natives of Southern India fancy resemble a pair of scissors.

“It is very common in these parts, and also at an elevation of 4800 feet above the sea (Shervaroy Hills): at the latter place I procured two specimens; the largest measured  $4\frac{1}{2}$ , and the other, which was young, was 1 foot in length. These reptiles are generally found under stones and in rocky places; frequently in the low country it is found in prickly-pear bushes (*Opuntia vulgaris*).

“In their habits they are extremely active for their size, and live on frogs, mice, birds, &c. On opening the Viper I procured on the Shervaroy Hills, I removed from its inside a *Mynah* (Indian Grackle), from a second in this place a field-rat, and from a third an immense toad was taken. These Vipers are readily killed by the slightest blow; on one occasion I had one caught alive by fixing a noose round its body, but raising it from the ground and suspending it by the noose for a few seconds killed it.

“The natives dread these snakes greatly, as their bite is said to prove rapidly fatal. Although they are common in this district, I have not heard of an instance of this occurring during a residence of five years at this place. Dr. A. Hunter, of our service, tells me that when he was Zillah Surgeon here, some years ago, a sepoy was bitten by one, and that the man’s life was saved by his sucking out the wound. During my stay on the Shervaroy Hills, the first specimen that was brought to me was immediately recognized by my friend B. A. Daly, Esq.,

a coffee-planter, who related the following circumstance that occurred to him a few years ago. Mr. Daly was out shooting with a few dogs (mongrel spaniels), when he came upon one of these Vipers, and the dogs having attacked the snake before he could kill it, three were bitten, one after the other; the first died almost instantly, the second in about two hours after, whilst it was being carried home, and the third lingered for nearly three months from emaciation, general debility, loss of appetite, &c., and eventually made a good recovery. This we can readily understand: the first dog bitten received the largest quantity of poison, whilst the second received less, and when it came to the third the supply was no doubt all but exhausted, and the rapidity with which the wounds must have been inflicted left no time for fresh poison to be secreted. This accounts for the ultimate recovery of the dog.

“In January last a lady at this place was returning from a walk with her child, followed by a bull-terrier puppy about six months old; her house was situated some distance from the gate, and the road on either side was covered with spear-grass. It was just dusk. The puppy suddenly darted in front and began to bark vociferously. Although the lady had seen nothing, she took alarm at the movements of the puppy, and called out to me as I happened to be passing by the gate at that moment. On going to see what was the matter, I found a large Viper coiled up in the centre of the road, and the puppy making a great noise from a respectful distance. The snake was closely coiled up, with the neck bent abruptly backwards, and the head fixed almost horizontally; it began to puff itself out something after the manner of the Puff-Adder, and hissed loudly, intently watching the movements of the dog, no doubt awaiting an opportunity to strike it, when I called the puppy away. The instant the puppy turned its head, the snake glided with the rapidity of lightning into the surrounding grass and disappeared. The next day it was killed in the same garden, and brought to me; it measured 4 feet 6 inches in length.

“These Snakes were formerly designated ‘Cobra Manil’ by the Portuguese, in consequence of their bite proving as rapidly fatal as that of the Cobra. The word Manil is a corruption of the Tamil word Mannunippāmhoo, which literally means Earth-eating Snake, and is the name given by the natives to the *Uropeltis grandis*, commonly termed ‘Double-headed’ Snake, and which they believe lives entirely on earth, from its being frequently found underground.”

The following papers were read:—

DESCRIPTION OF SOME NEW SPECIES OF MAMMALIA.

BY DR. JOHN EDWARD GRAY, F.R.S., F.L.S., ETC.

Among some Mammalia which Mr. A. R. Wallace has lately sent to the British Museum, which he collected in Morty Island in 1861, are two species of a frugivorous Bat, which does not appear to have been hitherto registered in the Catalogue. This Bat may be easily known from all the other *Cynopteri* by the extraordinary length of